



News Release

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Groundbreaking Outdoor Recreation and Education Legislation Passes State Senate with Broad Bi-Partisan Support

The Washington State Legislature on Wednesday passed the No Child Left Inside bill SB-5843, sending it to the Governor for approval. The bill, co-sponsored by Sen. Kevin Ranker (D-Orcas Island) and Sen. Linda Evans Parlette (R-Wenatchee), helps get Washington State children outside through outdoor recreation and education programs and encourages support for programs that enlist veterans in implementation and administration. The legislation also establishes an outdoor-recreation sector lead in the Governor's office. The Senate included \$1.3 million in funding for the bill in its version of the budget.

The measure was supported by the No Child Left Insider Alliance, a coalition of outdoor recreation, education and youth organizations, including YMCA of Greater Seattle, REI, IslandWood, the Wilderness Society, NatureBridge, Project Rebirth, the Mountaineers, Northwest Outward Bound School and North Cascades Institute. The Alliance has praised Senators Ranker and Parlette as committed advocates for the state's quality of life and the many benefits that Washington's natural areas create for all of us.

"It's incredible to see what can happen when you combine a great cause with tremendous legislative leadership," said Marc Berejka, REI's Community & Government Affairs Director. "This bill will benefit the children of Washington State and our outdoor recreation industry, which contributes more than \$21 billion to the economy each year while supporting nearly 200,000 jobs."

"Outdoor time is critical for our children's education and well-being," says Martin LeBlanc, VP for External Affairs at IslandWood. "Getting diverse kids from urban, suburban, and rural communities outdoors to learn, play, and explore will help them in science, improve their physical and mental health, and enable them to build a lifelong love of the great outdoors."

Governor Jay Inslee, who created a Task Force that recommended funding for No Child Left Inside last fall, is expected to sign the bill in the next few weeks.

About IslandWood

IslandWood is a nationally recognized outdoor learning center that connects thousands of children and adults every year to the natural world in communities throughout the Puget Sound region. Learn more: islandwood.org